

Faculty of Music · University of Toronto
OPERA DIVISION

presents:

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS'
Falstaff Opera

SIR
John
in Love

Mac Millan Theatre

EDWARD JOHNSON BUILDING

MARCH 2, 3, 9, 10 · 1984

8:00 P.M.

THE OPERA DIVISION

presents

SIR JOHN IN LOVE

(Canadian premiere)

by

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS*

Libretto based on "The Merry Wives of Windsor"
by William Shakespeare

CONDUCTOR	James Craig (March 2, 9)
	Michael Evans (March 3, 10)
DIRECTOR	Constance Fisher
CHOREOGRAPHER	Maisie MacPhee
SET DESIGNER	Kim Sisson
COSTUME CO-ORDINATOR	Elsie Sawchuk
LIGHTING DESIGNER	Robert Thomson
ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR	John Greer

ACT I

Scene I - A Street in Windsor - midday
Scene II - A Room in Page's House - that afternoon

ACT II

Scene I - The Garter Inn - early the next morning
Scene II - A Field near Windsor - later
Scene III - A Room in Ford's House - "between ten and eleven"

ACT III

Scene I - Ford's Garden - early evening
Scene II - Windsor Forest - midnight

There will be two fifteen minute intermissions

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and their agent, Boosey and Hawkes (Canada) Ltd.

CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

ROBERT SHALLOW, a country Justice	Robert Dirstein
SIR HUGH EVANS, a Welsh parson	Robert Hanks
ABRAHAM SLENDER, Shallow's nephew	Lenard Whiting
PETER SIMPLE, his servant	Jay Lambie
GEORGE PAGE, a citizen of Windsor	Patrick Timney (March 2, 9) Mark Wilson (March 3, 10)
SIR JOHN FALSTAFF	David Budgell (March 2, 9) Ronald Haney* (March 3, 10)
ROBIN, his page	Aaron Willinsky (March 2, 9) Gregory Sigurdson (March 3, 10)
BARDOLPH	Edward Franko
NYM	Emilio Roman
PISTOL	John Nieboer*
JENNY PLUCKPEARS, ladyfriend of Bardolph	Halyna Dytyniak
ALICE SHORTCAKE, ladyfriend of Nym	Alison Watson
ANNE PAGE, Page's daughter	Deborah Stevens (March 2, 9) Sung Ha Shin (March 3, 10)
MEG PAGE, her mother	Martha Collins (March 2, 9) Ingrid Attrot (March 3, 10)
ALICE FORD, Ford's wife	Kimberly Barber (March 2, 9) Linda Bennett (March 3, 10)
FENTON, a young courtier	Gary Rideout (March 2, 9) Stephen McClare (March 3, 10)
DR. CAIUS, a French physician	Daniel Stainton
RUGBY, his servant	Lawrence Cotton
NELL QUICKLY, his housekeeper	Anne McWatt (March 2, 9) Gabrielle Prata (March 3, 10)
THE HOST OF THE GARTER INN	Ronald Haney* (March 2, 9) Patrick Timney (March 3, 10)
FRANK FORD, a citizen of Windsor	Peter Barnes (March 2, 3, 9) David Budgell (March 10)
ROBERT, his servant	Nicholas Groenewegen
WILLIAM, Mrs. Page's son	James Barr (March 2, 9) Eric Sigurdson (March 3, 10)

* Graduate

FRIENDS OF ANNE PAGE

Adreana Braun
Sharon Crowther
Elizabeth Forster
Lisa Gaasenbeek
Carole Latimer
Angelique Leydier

Alison Pybus
Debra Selig
Linda Osborne
Jacqueline Tracey
Louise Van Winkle
Sheila Wills

FRIENDS OF ALICE FORD

Helene Marchand

Christine Sawicki

Lisa Sullivan

SERVANTS OF ALICE FORD

Francine Himelfarb

Jamie MacKinnon

Terese Sirek

SERVANTS OF FRANK FORD

Tim Chaput
James Jones

Bill Lavigne
Dennis Patrick

A PIPER

Paul Chappell

THE DANCERS

Keeley Dodd
Braydon Dodd
Nicole Egenberger
Alauna MacLean

Tia Moorhouse
Anne Orazem
Joseph Orazem
Beatrice van Dijk

THE DANCERS APPEARING IN THIS PRODUCTION ARE STUDENTS FROM THE
VERONICA MAZUR SCHOOL OF DANCE

SIR JOHN IN LOVE - A NOTE

Vaughan Williams' second opera, SIR JOHN IN LOVE, was premiered at the Royal Academy of Music in 1929 under the direction of Sir Malcolm Sargent; Sadler's Wells gave the first professional production in 1946. Shakespeare's comedy, THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR, provides the basis of the plot and most of the text. When the composer felt the need for lyrical expansion, he drew on the vast harvest of Elizabethan poetry - verses of fame and notable beauty. There is a tradition that Shakespeare wrote the play to satisfy a desire of Queen Elizabeth I to see Sir John Falstaff in an amorous intrigue. True or not, the vicissitudes of the fat knight and his extraordinary companions have proven irresistible operatic material from Salieri to Verdi. On this matter it is best to let the composer speak for himself; his approach to the opera is frankly outlined in the preface to the score:

"To write yet another opera about Falstaff at this time of day may seem the height of impertinence, for one appears to be entering into competition with three great men - Shakespeare, Verdi and Holst. With regard to Shakespeare my only excuse can be that he is fair game, like the Bible, and may be made use of nowadays even for advertisements of soap and razors.

"I hope that it may be possible to consider that even Verdi's masterpiece does not exhaust all the possibilities of Shakespeare's genius. And I hope I have treated Holst with the sincerest flattery not only in imitating his choice of Falstaff as the subject of an opera but in imitating his use of English folk-tunes in the texture of the music..."

"My chief object in SIR JOHN IN LOVE has been to fit this wonderful comedy with, I trust, not unpleasant music. In the matter of the use of folk-tunes, they only appear occasionally and their titles have no dramatic relevancy (except possibly in the case of 'John, come kiss me now'). When a particular folk-tune appeared to me to be the fitting accompaniment to the situation, I have used it. When I could not find a suitable folk-tune, I have made shift to make up something of my own. I therefore offer no apology for the occasional use of a folk-song to enhance a dramatic point. If the result is successful I feel justified; if not, no amount of 'originality' will save the situation..."

ORCHESTRA

(Members of the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra)

FIRST VIOLIN

Paul Zevenhuizen (Concert
Master)
Jayne Maddison
Janet Horne
Carol Fujino
Angela Cox
Sarah Newham
Nancy Lokan
Nancy Borusiewicz
Susan Cosco
Frank Zambello

SECOND VIOLIN

Anders Norberg*
Marc Sabat
Janie Kim
Lawrence Beckwith
Michael Sproule
Angela McCullough
Marie Flexer
Fiona Huggett

VIOLA

Rifat Qureshi*
Beverley Spotton
Fiona Walsh
Anyia Aide
Mary McGeer
Ross Daly

VIOLONCELLO

Peggy Lee*
Sandra Wells
Mark Chambers
Wendy Tummon
Sonja De Langen
Laura Jones

DOUBLE BASS

Peter Jones*
Max Kasper
Louis Garson
Rick Walters
Tracy Mortimore

PICCOLO

Carol Stebbings

FLUTES

David Gerry*
Carol Stebbings

OBOE

Peter Voisey*
Martin Houtman

ENGLISH HORN

Peter Voisey

CLARINET

Katherine Carleton*
Martin Arnold

BASSOON

Don Shore*
Wendy Rose

HORN

Margaret Howard*
Mary Lee

TRUMPET

Geoff Thompson*
Jim Gardiner

TROMBONE

Greg Farrugia

TIMPANI

David Bradshaw

PERCUSSION

Michael Côté

HARP

Sharlene Wallace

* Principal

- OPERA DIVISION -

CO-ORDINATOR	Michael Albano
MUSICAL DIRECTOR	James Craig
HEAD COACH & CONDUCTOR	Michael Evans
MUSIC STAFF	George Brough, John Greer, Stephen Ralls
MUSICAL ASSISTANT	Julia Iacono
STAGE DIRECTORS	Michael Albano, Constance Fisher
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	Freda Chayka

PRODUCTION STAFF

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR/ PRODUCTION MANAGER	Fred Perruzza
STAGE MANAGER	Bernard Fox*
ASSISTANT TO THE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR	David Macdonell
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS	Margot Sim*, Lydia Timofeeff**
CARPENTERS	Howard Thornley, William Ayres, Michael Switzer
SCENIC ARTISTS	Edward Kotanen, Jules Tonus
PROPERTIES	Kathy Layne
LIGHTING BOARD OPERATOR	Howard Thornley
ASSISTANT TO THE LIGHTING DESIGNER	Brenda Powell***
FLYMEN	William Ayres, Michael Switzer
STAGE CREW	John Allen, Dan Collins
PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS	Geoffrey Layne, George Bulat, Riri Sirry

WARDROBE SUPERVISOR	Sue Murphy
WARDROBE ASSISTANT	Diane McCann-Davis
SEAMSTRESS	Maxyne Baker

MAKE-UP SUPERVISOR	Jack Medhurst
ASSISTED BY	Jeanne Armstrong, Maria Finta, Cherie van Dyk, Leslie Whittaker

WIG MISTRESS	Fina Kahn
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- * By permission of Canadian Actors' Equity Association
- ** In co-operation with Ryerson Polytechnical Institute
- *** In co-operation with Niagara College of Applied Art

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Laurie Bassett, Canadian Opera Company, Canadian Opera Guild (London Branch), Canadian Opera Guild (Oakville Branch), Canadian Opera Guild (Peel Branch), Canadian Opera Women's Committee, Warren Hughes (Costume House), Malabar Ltd., The Rotary Club of Toronto (Armour Heights).

The Opera Division wishes to thank The McLean Foundation and Mr. Robert W. H. Binnie for the generous contributions towards the production costs of this opera.

In the past years the Faculty of Music has presented to the community a rich variety of concerts, recitals, lectures and opera productions. Many of these are offered free of charge; ticket prices for the rest are kept as low as possible and do not begin to cover the actual costs.

As we present the 1984-5 season and plan the next, we are still faced with budget constraints that might reduce the number of events we can continue to offer. To maintain the current level of activity and to ensure that our gifted students may continue to perform before the public during their years of study at the Faculty, we seek your support.

While unrestricted gifts permit the greatest flexibility, you may direct your contribution to be used for a specific purpose. Please send your cheque, payable to the University of Toronto, to the *FACULTY OF MUSIC*, 80 Queen's Park Crescent, Toronto, M5S 1A1. Include your full name and mailing address for income tax receipt purposes. All gifts to the Faculty of Music are tax deductible.

Gustav Ciamaga, Dean

NEXT OPERA EVENT:

OPERA EXCERPTS, April 27, April 28, May 2, May 4, 1984
8:00 p.m., MacMillan Theatre

Unreserved tickets available from the Box Office from 5:00 p.m. on the evening of each performance. Tickets are \$3.00 each.

NEXT EVENT:

Helena Bowkun, piano, Walter Hall, 8:00 p.m., March 11, 1984, free.

SIR JOHN IN LOVE - SYNOPSIS OF THE PLOT

Act I: Scene I - A Street in Windsor - midday

As the curtain rises Justice Robert Shallow and Sir Hugh Evans are converging on the house of Mr. George Page in search of Sir John Falstaff. They have grievances against the knight and as they pour out their woes to Page, Shallow's nephew, Slender, continues to work on a love-sonnet to Page's daughter, Anne. Presently Sir John issues from the house and makes short work of his antagonists. The ensuing hubbub also involves the knight's rascally companions, Bardolph, Nym and Pistol and is broken off by the entrance of Anne Page, her mother and Mrs. Ford. Courtesies are exchanged and Mr. Page invites all into his house to "drink down all unkindness". Shallow is distracted from his tirade against Falstaff by Evans' suggestion of a possible marriage between Slender and Anne. Slender's servant, Peter Simple, is enlisted as a messenger and is sent to Mrs. Quickly, housekeeper to the fiery Dr. Caius, to gain her aid in the proposed matchmaking. With some difficulty, Anne Page manages to get the three extraordinary gentlemen into the house. She sadly contemplates marriage to Slender - her father's choice of husband. The man she really loves - Fenton, a courtier, (and therefore not socially suitable as a husband) arrives and the young people have only a few moments together before her father calls her into the house. A bizarre procession arrives - Dr. Caius, his servant Rugby and Mrs. Quickly. While doctor and servant are momentarily preoccupied, Peter Simple slips the letter from Shallow and Evans to Mrs. Quickly. Caius realizes that something is amiss and when Simple blurts out the truth - that he has brought a letter to Mrs. Quickly to speak a good word for Evans to Anne - the Frenchman becomes furious and threatens to cut Evans' throat in a duel. When the commotion ends, Dr. Caius declares that he himself will marry Anne Page and is assured by Mrs. Quickly that Anne loves him and "all will be well". Fenton, who has overheard everything, gains a similar assurance from the resourceful housekeeper. Knavery returns with the appearance of Bardolph, Nym and Pistol - thoroughly parched from a successful thieving expedition. Falstaff, aware of his diminishing financial resources, cuts the rejoicing short with the announcement that he means to make love to Ford's wife. Ignoring the general consternation, he adds that he is convinced that Mrs. Page has also given him the "good-eye". Since both women appear to have easy access to their husbands' purse-strings, he has prepared two love-letters and expects immediate delivery of them. Pistol and Nym, with suddenly developed consciences, refuse to carry the messages. In disgust, Falstaff drives them off and enlists the service of his page, Robin. Pistol and Nym intercept Mr. Ford and reveal the projected designs on his wife. Ford, enraged by the threat of cuckoldry, resolves to take revenge.

Scene II - A Room in Page's House - that afternoon

Falstaff's letter has been delivered to Mrs. Page and her angry outburst at his effrontery is interrupted by Mrs. Ford who has received a similar message. As the two outraged women compare letters, Mrs. Quickly happens by and, equally scandalized by the knight's behaviour, joins in a plan for vengeance.

Act II: Scene I - The Garter Inn - early the next morning

Falstaff is enjoying a morning draught of sack when Mrs. Quickly arrives to tell him that Mrs. Ford will be happy to receive him "between ten and eleven" - when her husband is out. She adds that Mrs. Page, too, would welcome his advances one day, but "her husband is seldom from home". Falstaff's rejoicing at the news is interrupted by the arrival of a certain Mr. Brook (i.e. Ford). The visitor reveals that he is hopelessly in love with Mrs. Ford and suggests that the knight's vast experience and expertise in such matters might well pave the way for others. A sum of money would defray any expenses that Sir John might encounter as he proves that the lady's virtue is not impregnable. Puzzled but agreeable, Falstaff reveals to the wretched man that an appointment has already been set. Ford's sudden outburst of jealous rage is interrupted by Dr. Caius in search of the host of the Garter Inn. The plans for a duel with Pastor Evans are revealed and the host persuades Ford to attend the event. As they leave, Sir John, in his best attire, sets off for his meeting with Alice Ford.

Scene II - A Field near Windsor - later

Fenton and the host of the Garter are discussing the young man's prospects for the hand of Anne. As Fenton enlists the host's help, Anne and a group of her friends arrive. The host extolls Fenton's virtues but Anne teasingly suggests that he should "woo for himself". She then reveals to the host that she has told her mother that she will marry Dr. Caius and at the same time promised her father that Mr. Slender will win her hand. Fenton declares that neither suitor will be successful and the host promises that, with his help, they may wed that very night. Presently a doleful Sir Hugh Evans arrives to take up the challenge of Dr. Caius. The duel is an ill-matched affair and is quickly cut short by the host. As a church bell sounds the hour of ten, Ford invites the company to his house where he promises them sport hunting a "monster".

Scene III - A Room in Ford's House - "between ten and eleven"

Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page instruct the servants that, when ordered, they are to take the laundry basket and empty it into a muddy ditch near the Thames. When Mrs. Quickly announces the arrival of Falstaff, she and Mrs. Page hide while Mrs. Ford lies seductively on a couch. Sir John enters and, thinking her asleep, begins a passionate love-song. Mrs. Ford, pretending to dream of the fat knight, appears to be yielding whereupon Mrs. Quickly, as arranged, runs in to say that Mrs. Page is coming. Falstaff hides and Mrs. Page, feigning great agitation, announces Ford's supposed arrival. To the horror of the women, the enraged husband and his followers do indeed appear as Falstaff escapes detection in the laundry basket. While the rest of the house is searched, the women manage to get rid of basket and knight together and Mrs. Page conceals herself behind a curtain. Becoming suspicious, Ford tears it aside and all are astonished by the appearance of Mrs. Page who points out that "wives may be merry" and still remain honest.

Act III: Scene I - Ford's Garden - early evening

The opera's final act opens with a moving scene of reconciliation between Mr. and Mrs. Ford. The Pages and some of the other conspirators discuss the details of a new plot as the Merry Wives feel that the knight's punishment has been too lenient. Mrs. Page relates the tale of Herne the Hunter whose ghost roams Windsor Forest at midnight; Falstaff will be lured there and further chastisement will be inflicted. The Pages, however, have a more serious plot to occupy them: Mrs. Page informs Caius that Anne will be "in green" and Mr. Page tells Slender she will be "in white". Each urges the chosen suitor to steal away and marry Anne at the height of the revels. The evening draws on and all hurry off to prepare for Falstaff's final humiliation.

Scene II - Windsor Forest - midnight

At the stroke of midnight Sir John arrives at Herne's Oak. Faintly depressed by the ducking in the river, his spirits soar as Mrs. Page and Mrs. Ford seem to fall into his arms. When goblins, fairies and elves appear on every side, Falstaff is terrified into a state of exhaustion. He revives as the maskers, one by one, reveal themselves. In the midst of the previous confusion, Caius has darted away with a fairy "in green" - actually the page, Robin; Slender, equally fleet, has made off with a fairy "in white" - the young son of Meg and George Page. The complicated situation is finally resolved with the entrance of the newly-married Anne and Fenton. Sir John manages to turn aside parental wrath and with good humour sums up the evening's shenanigans with his final comment: "whether men do laugh or weep...there is underneath the sun nothing in true earnest done - and the world is but a play".